



Arkansas Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Initiative

Early Care and Education Work Group - October 7, 2004, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Members Present: Jenny Adair, Donna Alliston, Judy Clay, Geania B. Dickey, Deborah Gangluff, Jana Gifford, Dana Gonzales, David Griffin, Joanna Grymes, Kathy MacKay, Karen Marshall, Sue Martin, Martha Reeder, Sandra Reifeiss, Vicki Shelby, Thomas Shepard, Kathy Stegall, Ratha Turpin, Jody Veit-Edrington, Cara Walloch, and Paula C. Watson

Agenda Item #1: Review Work from August 31 and Update from grantee mtg.

Discussion:

Martha referred to the document "Result of Work Group Sessions - 8/31/04 - AECCS Joint Meeting," which can be accessed at <http://www.state.ar.us/childcare/8-31summary.pdf> on the web site. She just returned from October 3-6 grantee meeting of all MCHB grantees, where some upcoming deadlines were shared with the state Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems grantees. It is most likely that Arkansas will apply for another year of "planning" and continue to develop a master plan, with an eye on completing the fleshing out of this plan by early Summer 2005.

A meeting of all Region VI MCHB grantees was conducted as a portion of the meeting. Martha expressed surprise at seeing many Arkansas grantees present. She intends to see if these programs are represented as part of current systems planning.

The question has been asked related to the difference between "planning" and "implementation" for grant purposes. If it can be done now—do it! If it cannot be done now, this is often because of a system barrier that is currently in place.

Result:

Four main areas of concern emerged from the August 31 meeting that stretch across all five groups, and Martha asked that work groups seek ways to work together with other groups on these concerns:

- Data Sharing
- Access to/mapping of resources
- Funding Strategies
- A Prepared Workforce

The national grantee meeting also revealed the opportunity to ask for specific technical assistance, as needed. The work group should consider specific needs so that we may take advantage of this while monies are still available. It would be possible, for instance, for the EC & ED group to bring in specialists from other states that have restructured the tiered reimbursement systems in their state, to discuss lessons learned, etc.

Each group should be developing reasonable and alternative solutions to the recognized barriers so that these may be addressed at the highest agency levels of decision-making. As work groups meet, these barriers should be noted and plans should be developed that can be presented to the Government Interagency Team for consideration.

Martha also indicated that she can help work groups with some funds to develop printed materials to get the message out.

Agenda Item # Tiered System

Discussion: Data from other states was gathered and sent out by Kathy Stegall in response to the August 31 meeting. She noted during the meeting that the data does not always tell the full story. Concerns were expressed by the attendees related to the tiered system. Review of the system should be ongoing. A plan is needed to make this happen. Other concerns pertained to curriculum for all classes/groups, communications, dual regulations, professional development, tiered licensing, number of tiers, need to define "quality" and "tiered" in the plan, accountability, certification of teaching staff, "quality" centers, private providers (centers) vs. public schools, etc. Also, tiers must include school-age. In writing the plan, we need to think about where Arkansas needs to be five years down the road, making sure to examine possible barriers.

The Work Group divided up into three small groups to review information mailed in the packet related to systems in other states. The positives from each state were listed by the groups (see below)

Tennessee—

ECERS & Others

Baseline State Report Card—Mandatory

Every Licensed Center Rated

Subjective i.e. Staff turnover

Voluntary (request) not to Participate

Star System < 3 Stars

Plan: Staff Incentives and Staff Retention

3 Stars (subsidize quality across board for all)

Colorado—

5 Levels 0 - 4 (Point System)

Learning environment assessed

Family Partnership

Training and Education

Adult/Child ratio and grade size

Accreditation - national

Didn't like:

Initial Evaluation

Performance profile

Work with Mentor (coaches) to build a path of improvement

Result:

WANT—

- Subsidized quality for all programs
- Have accountability of money i.e. (enrollment #'s)
Average Daily Attendance
- Incentives—
 - Year-round care
 - Infant-Toddler Care
 - Wrap-around Services
 - After School Care
- Part-time Care?

ARKANSAS COMPONENTS

MEASURE—

--Licensing Compliance (#1 Star)

--Training and Education

(professional development)

--Learning Environment (indoor and outdoor)

- Literacy
- Teaching interactions
- Assessment (e.g. Child assessment)
- Equipment and materials
- Transitioning

--Parent/Family/Community (Collaboration) -

At this point, work of the Early Care & Ed group must seek to intersect with Parent Ed, Medical Home & Family Support groups. The definitions of "quality" should include attention to parent involvement plans, resources for family support, and an adequate support system for the child's medical home needs.

--Group Size

- Staff/Child Ratio

*Licensing Compliant--

(plus 3 more levels)

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<p><u>Kentucky</u>— (Financed through Tobacco money)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">--Caregiver ratios--Child care staff training--Curriculum--Reg. Compliance--Business PracticesPersonnel issues <p>4 Star System</p> <p>1 is baseline (state regulations) + 3 levels</p> <p>Money incentives and enrollment</p> <p>Based on under 3 and over</p> <p><u>North Carolina</u>—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Program Standards (Point System 1 - 5)• Educational level of staff (1 - 5)• Compliance History (1 - 5) <p>5 Star System based on Points (Stars on License)</p> <p>Funded by Smart Start</p>	<p>NOTE: During the discussion about Professional development of Staff, Jody Veit-Edrington mentioned an attempted pilot project by Dr. A Lindsay (UALR) and she related to early childcare staff training and education. They were working together to come up with at least 17 people at the same point in early childhood programs to participate in a four-year degree program. The participants would have to take classes (one or two) each semester. Classes would be offered after school, evenings, during the summers, etc. Location of classes were to be determined based on where students were located. Students would not have to quit working until time for student teaching. The program would begin as an informal program, pilot project, to help meet needs of childcare centers. Program did not succeed because they were unable to locate 17 participants.</p>
<p>TASKS: Small Group Meetings—Drop in at DHS Offices to Review and Make Suggestions on Tiered Quality Strategy. A chart (Arkansas Components for a Tiered Quality Strategy) will be emailed to work group members, so that they may begin making decisions concerning to which tier of quality various components should be assigned.</p>	<p>Tuesday, October 19, 2004 12 - 3 p.m. @DHS/DCCECER</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Wednesday, October 27, 2004 12:30 - 4 p.m. @DHS/DCCECE</p>
<p>Next Meeting Date for Full Committee:</p>	<p>Thursday, November 4, 2004 9:30 a.m.- 12 p.m. Calvary Baptist Church - New Youth Auditorium (Fireside Room N/A)</p>